

REMARKS

The Applicants request entry of this Second Preliminary Amendment, favorable reconsideration of this case, and early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Status of the Claims

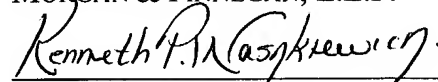
Upon entry of this Second Preliminary Amendment, the Applicants have rewritten claims 1, 7-11, 14-17, 19-22, and 24-25, and canceled claims 6 and 23. Thus, claims 1-5, 7-22, and 24-26 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 14, and 22 are independent claims.

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AUTHORIZATION

The undersigned hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge all required fees, fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, or all required extension of time fees for this paper to Deposit Account Number 09-0441, Order Number ARC9-99-0088.

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.



Kenneth P. Waszkiewicz
Registration Number: 45,724

SENDER'S ADDRESS:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154-0053

202-857-7887 – phone
202-857-7929 – fax

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